

AFCARS ASSESSMENT REVIEW FINDINGS – General Requirements

State: California

Report Period Under Review: April 1, 2003 - September 30, 2003 (2003B)

REQUIREMENT	FINDING/NOTES	RATING FACTOR
POPULATION REQUIREMENTS		2
<p>45 CFR 1355.40(a) Scope of the data collection system – foster care</p> <p>Must include all children in foster care for whom the agency has responsibility for placement, care, or supervision (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children who are required to be provided the protection of section 422(b)(10) of the Social Security Act (the Act) (Appendix A – SECTION II). • All children supervised by or under the responsibility of another public agency with which the title IV-B/E agency has an agreement under title IV-E and the State makes title IV-E foster care maintenance payments (Appendix A - SECTION II). <p>Includes Native American children covered under section 422(b)(10) of the Act, (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).</p> <p>Out of State placements. The State making the placement submits the information on the child (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).</p> <p>Includes all children who have been in foster care at least 24 hours (Appendix A - SECTION II).</p>	<p>The State includes children for whom it has responsibility for placement and care.</p> <p>The State does not have title IV-E agreements with Tribes. The county agencies have a Memorandum of Understanding with the county probation offices for title IV-E funds. These youth are included in the reporting population.</p> <p>The State correctly does not include in the reporting population those children that were discharged to relative guardianship (“Kin-Gap”).</p> <p align="center">Yes.</p> <p>The State is including those placements made out of state as part of its reporting population. The State has a selection option of “out-of-State ICPC.” These children must not be picked up by the selection logic for extraction if the child is not in the State’s/county’s responsibility for care and placement.</p> <p>The State incorrectly includes children in care for less than 24 hours. The State must include only children that have been out of their home for more than 24 hours, regardless of the child’s placement</p>	

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<p>Does not include children who are in their own homes under the responsibility of the State agency (Appendix A - SECTION II).</p> <p>Include all children who are in the placement, care, or supervision responsibility of the title IV-B/E agency that are on “trial home visits” (Child Welfare Policy Manual, Section 1.3, AFCARS Reporting Population, Question #11; 1.2B.7 AFCARS, Data Elements and Definitions, Foster Care Specific Elements, Placements, Question #7).</p>	<p>setting or payment status.</p> <p>The State correctly does not include children that have never been removed from their home (either by a physical or “constructive” removal”).</p> <p>According to the responses provided by the State to the foster care population questions, children under the agency’s “care, custody, and control” are in the AFCARS reporting population, including those on a “trial home visit” (Question 1, page 1). However, the screen selection list does not contain the option for “trial home visit” as a “placement setting.”</p> <p>The reporting population selection is based upon “placements.” (See Technical Requirements Findings.) Therefore, if the child is placed back in his/her own home, they may or may not be included in the reporting population. The placement episode is closed, but the State still has “dependency.”</p> <p>The State must include children that are returned home while under the State’s placement, care or supervision. The AFCARS reporting population is to include children that are returned home for a specified period of time, regardless of the length of time of the specified period. If after a specified period of time there is a court review and the judge orders another specified period of time for the child to remain home and retains the agency’s placement, care or supervision, then the State is to continue</p>	

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<p>Includes youth over the age of 18 if a payment is being made on behalf of the child (Child Welfare Policy Manual, Section 1, AFCARS).</p>	<p>including the child in its AFCARS population. If the return home is for a non-specified period of time, the State must consider the child discharged from care after six months of the return home. If the child re-enters care under a new court order, then this would be a new removal episode. If there is a motion to “continue the existing court order,” then this would continue the existing removal episode.</p> <p>The State’s age of majority is 18. The State is including youth up to the age of 21 that are receiving child welfare services and are in placement. The State claims title IV-E for payments for those youth up through the age of 19 that meet the title IV-E requirements. The State must not include youth age 19 and older.</p>	
<p>45 CFR 1355.40(a) Scope of the data collection system – adoption</p> <p>Includes all adopted children placed by the agency, and all adopted children for whom the State agency is providing adoption assistance (either ongoing or for non-recurring expenses), or for whom care or services are provided directly or by contract or agreement with other private or public agencies (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3)).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on all children adopted in the State during the reporting period in whose adoption the State has had any involvement. All adoptions after 10/1/94 that meet the criteria below must be reported. Criteria (Appendix B – Section II): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Children who had been in foster care under the responsibility and care of the agency. b) All special needs children, whether or not they were in 	<p>The State correctly includes all children that were adopted from the State’s child welfare system.</p> <p>The State is not including those adoptions that they are involved with under the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - special needs children, whether or not they were in the public foster care system prior to their adoption and for whom non-recurring expenses were reimbursed. - children adopted for whom an adoption assistance payment or service is being provided based on arrangements with the State agency. 	

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<p>the public foster care system prior to their adoption and for whom non-recurring expenses were reimbursed. c) Children adopted for whom an adoption assistance payment or service is being provided based on arrangements with the State agency.</p> <p>Adoptions prior to 10/1/94, with title IV-E adoption subsidies, report aggregate data (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3)).</p> <p>For children adopted out-of-State, the placing State reports the adoption data (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3)).</p> <p>Voluntarily reports on all other adoptions. (Appendix B – Section II).</p>	<p>The State must include these adoptions.</p> <p align="center">Not applicable</p> <p>The State includes those children adopted and placed out of State in its reporting population.</p> <p>The State is not including all other adoptions at its option.</p>	
TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS		2
<p>45 CFR 1355.40(b) Foster care and adoption reporting requirements</p> <p>The data must be extracted from the data system as of the last day of the reporting period (45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1)).</p> <p>The data must be submitted in electronic form as described in Appendix C (45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1)).</p> <p>The data must be in record layouts as delineated in Appendix D (45 CFR 1355.40(b)).</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p> <p align="center">Yes</p> <p align="center">Yes</p>	
<p>Appendix A, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care Data Elements and Appendix B, 45 CFR 1355 Adoption Data Elements</p> <p>State uses sequential numbering of the case record number or encrypts the record number.</p>	<p>The State submits an encrypted case record number that meets ACF guidelines. However, see notes in</p>	

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	the element matrices regarding record number. There may be a problem with either how the person numbers are getting assigned or how the number is getting encrypted. The State and ACF are further exploring this problem during the post-site visit analysis.	
Appendix C, 45 CFR 1355 Electronic Data Transmission Format Data file must be in ASCII format. Elements must be comprised of integer (numeric) value(s). All records must be a fixed length.	<p align="center">Yes</p> <p align="center">Yes</p> <p align="center">Yes</p>	
ACYF-PI-CB-95-09, Reissued May 23, 1995 State extracts all records based on the transaction date of discharge.	The program code selects records that have a placement count greater than zero. The State does not use the transaction dates as the basis for the extraction. Extraction is based on “placements.” If a child is in the agency’s responsibility for care and placement, but is not in a placement setting, the record will not be extracted. The State must use the transaction date and not extract the files based on placement location.	
Technical Bulletin #2, File Format State uses correct file name for transmission.	In general, the State does use the correct file name. However, there have been occasions that the State had to resubmit due to an improper filename.	

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<p>Data Extraction</p> <p>For children who are in care on the last day of the reporting period, information as of the last day of the period is extracted.</p> <p>For children who were discharged during the period, information on the most recent episode is extracted.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	
<p>File Creation</p> <p>State attaches footnotes to files.</p> <p>State is using proper format for the creation of footnotes.</p> <p>State uses DCU and DQU on its data file.</p>	<p>Occasionally.</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>The State does use the utilities prior to submission. However, the State has not incorporated them into an ongoing quality assurance process.</p>	
<p>Data Conversion</p> <p>State transferred historical information on open cases. Specifically, it included information on: date of first removal, total number of removals, and whether the child's mother was married at the time of the child's birth. If the case was open at the time of conversion, information on the number of placement settings was included.</p> <p>The information system has the capability of recording historical information. This should apply to both open cases in which historical information must be entered, and for closed cases that re-open after conversion and must be entered into the system.</p>	<p>Conversion varied among counties. Those counties that were automated prior to SACWIS converted most of the data to CWS/CMS. In many counties the data was entered manually.</p> <p>The system appears to be able to support the entry of older information if a closed case were to re-open and the worker needed to add certain historical data.</p> <p>See notes in the element matrices relating to the quality of the data based on the case file review.</p>	